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Three major areas of confrontation within the educational system stem from power shifts taking place within the social system as a whole. The taxpayer's revolt against increased school expenditures as juxtaposed to teachers' collective demands for salary increases forms the nucleus of one major confrontation area. Secondly, urban schools face a dilemma while attempting to reconcile black power demands for community control of schools with the principle that centralization is a logical corollary of increasing interdependence and homogeneity within the society. The revolt of college and high school students against their administrations forms the third major area of confrontation. Although the educational subsystem must be capable of adapting to new social demands, these three distresses are symptomatic of societal, rather than strictly educational, ills. As such, the root causes of these distresses can only be treated by the integrated efforts of the many subsystems comprising the total social system. (JH)

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THE SCHOOL AS A SOCIAL SYSTEM - STRESS AND DISTRESS *

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Since the last time I had chance to harangue you (1966) there have been many realignments in the battle for the control of the schools, the public schools especially, but now also the colleges and the universities. My colleagues reproach me for using the adversarial language of war and remind me that we are all working for school improvement; that cooperation not confrontation is the road to salvation. I regret having to disagree with these views, not because I favor conflict over peace, but because the conditions for genuine cooperation have not yet been achieved. Nor will they be achieved until all parties respect each other's motives and competence, so that the collaboration will be between equals and not a euphemism for domination of one side by the other. Much as we all like to keep discussion on a high plane of principle, it is simply naive not to take account of who is appointed to panels in the U.S. Office of Education; who is invited to important conferences; who gets which grants--in short, who distributes the money and prestige rewards in the educational sweepstakes. I believe any dispassionate examination will support the hypothesis that since 1957 two Establishments have been contending for the control of schools. One is the Carnegie-Ford-U.S.O.E.-Industry-Liberal Arts coalition (the new Establishment), and the other has been made up of professional organizations of public school personnel and the teacher training faculties in colleges of education (the old Establishment). Until the early sixties the new Establishment mounted its attack in the name of excellence as defined by professors of the academic disciplines. Curriculum, teacher training, and school organization were all judged by this standard. Thereafter, Washington and the nation were made aware of the poverty problem, the race problem, and the large overlap between the two. Inasmuch as the U.S. economy could not tolerate sizable

EA 002 384

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pockets of underconsumption if it were to maintain its growth rate, the problem of the disadvantaged rose in our list of priorities about as rapidly as did the war in Vietnam. These twin miseries ignited riots both in the ghettos and on college campuses.

Educationally, the gross effect of the new orientation was to put a crimp in the new Establishment's pitch for academic excellence. A demand that the school concern itself with environmental factors in development, personal relationships, concrete problems rather than abstract learnings, etc., was heard throughout the land. The new Establishment rediscovered Progressive education, but was spared embarrassment by the fact that so many of its bright young men thought they invented it. With fine disregard for historical fact, it now blamed the old Establishment for blocking a return to the child-centered socially sensitive school. Only people trained in the Peace Corps and college activists could effect the second revolution in the schools.

Although the older battles about curricula and methods continue, the battle lines are drawn somewhat differently. Today the crucial confrontations are between the taxpayers and the public school teachers; between the black separatists and our pattern of school organization developed over the last 100 years, between students and the administrations of high schools and colleges. Such shifts place upon all members of the total system and its subsystems the task of redefining their roles and loyalties and of integrating them into some sort of commitment. The ordinary stresses of being part of a system and of many subsystems turn into distress when the roles are shifting and the course of commitment is unclear.

The main purpose of this talk is to share some observations and a few speculations about the stresses within the school as a social system, between it and some other systems, and their possible outcomes.

Systems, Social Systems, School as a Social System

Assuming your professional preparation is what it should have been, it is not necessary to say much about the nature of systems and of schools as social systems. Any good course in the social foundations of education would have apprised you of the major concepts and theories. I shall utter--simply for the sake of the record--that a system is an arrangement of elements in some intelligible scheme. In a social system the elements are human individuals or groups of them. Presumably their goals serve to organize the elements. Parents, teachers, pupils, school boards, custodians, etc., are each assigned a role which corresponds to a status or position within the totality of processes and things that comprise the system.

Social organization becomes more and more mandatory as the elements and their relationships become more dense and more tightly interdependent. For example, in a small community, air pollution could be stopped by putting a few offenders in jail; the megalopolis air pollution involves everybody from a cigaret smoker to the steel maker. Very few problems nowadays fail to reach the Congress of the United States, because so few of them can be dealt with on any narrower scale. Of primary importance in trying to understand a system is the spotting of the positions at which decisions that move the system in one direction or another or produce changes within the system are made.

The efficiency of a system depends on the division of labor and coordination of laborers. In a social system the division of labor runs afoul of the fact that the ultimate units of the system--persons--resist being split up into specialized roles. Teachers, administrators, and pupils at one time or another all want to be regarded as persons, not merely as functionaries within a system. Teachers want to be consumers and family members; pupils think there is more to life than study; parents want their offspring to be treated as unique individuals, and administrators are torn in many directions by their loyalties to teachers, pupils, taxpayers, industry, government, and their own careers.

Because persons are multivalent, social organizations develop (1) a formal system which defines divisions of labor, lines of authority, and rules of procedure that cover all conceived contingencies. The duties and rights of boards of education, principals, teachers, pupils, taxpayers, legislatures are set forth and wholly or partially institutionalized by constitutions, charters, and laws, (2) because of the multiple roles people play in the system, an operating system of power, authority, and ways of getting things done comes into being. The operating system only roughly corresponds to the formal one. At any time the formal system can be invoked by one or more of the parties to regulate the operational system, and the operational system can be used to subvert or disrupt the formal one. This has given rise, as we now know so well, to the moral question: Is it ever right for people to flout the formal rules of a system? Is it right to interpose formal rules when members of the system believe they are being unjustly treated by these rules? Are these rules right in themselves, or are they justified by the needs of the people concerned? Are they right in some transcultural sense, or are they devices used by the people in power to preserve their advantages in a particular situation? Thus the stress between the formal and operational systems can turn into a source of distress.

I shall only mention--again for the sake of the record--some of the attempts to use systems analysis to understand and control social behavior. School administrators now regard systems theory as an important part of learning how to manage the personnel within their school systems. Hints have been eagerly received from group dynamics, especially from the interaction patterns within small groups. The trick, of course, is to preserve some semblance of personhood in a system which has, on occasion, to regard its units as nonpersons. Subtle psychological

self-examination, role playing, sensitivity training, are all designed to help turn the trick--all of which is summed up in that vague and somewhat awkward phrase "relating to people."*

Another gambit is to think of the system as a network of communications. All troubles are then diagnosed as a failure in communications, and the remedy is more and better communications. Both of these benigh theories assume that deep down everybody in the system has the same interests and desires, and if only this can be brought to consciousness, the group would arrive at what Professor R. Bruce Raup has so aptly christened the community of uncoerced consensus. The confrontations now besetting our society call this assumption itself into question. Participatory democracy unfortunately works only so long as everybody involved believes in it.

More Machiavelian and Marxist interpretations of systems take economic or political power as the key principle. The various people in a system belong to classes that either have power or would like to get it away from those who do have it. A Machiavelian would say that the elites holding power are ready to use whatever means are necessary to keep it. A Marxist would say that control of the means of production is the key principle, and that inevitably the exploited classes (the proletariat) will unite to overthrow the exploiters (capitalists) and restore justice and equality in the distribution of goods and services. On either analysis "right" and "good" are what serve a group's interests. Fair and right in this game is whatever gives advantage, and all appeal to a higher morality or law is to be construed as part of the game--another counter that helps rally support of the people who are gulled into believing that such appeals are somehow valid. Both analyses come out at about the same principle: Might is the only right.

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*Cf. for a recent example Rensis Likert, The Human Organization, Its Management and Value, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.

Still another approach to the study of systems is systems analysis. If the state of a system is the result of a number of variables operating in relation to each other, if we could give a value to every variable at any given moment, and if we knew how the variables were correlated to each other, then we could predict (1) the effect of what a change in any variable would do to others and (2) the response of the system as a whole to a change in any or all of the variables. Such knowledge, of course, would be of enormous value for social planning and control. It has been put to use in studies of war and weaponry as a means of planning national and global strategy. With the help of computers that make the handling of numerous variables practicable, systems analysis may enable us to plan and control our economic system and perhaps education as well. All of this is social engineering, and although it rubs most of us the wrong way to be so manipulable, we in education would be well advised to be selective about our response to planning and social engineering.

For example, the cost efficiency approach which the erstwhile Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara instituted in the Defense Department is being urged on education. The proposed schemes for national assessment, whatever merits they may have, will be used to measure the efficiency of the money input into schools and the consequent output per dollar. There are many reasons for doubting that this approach will work very well in education, some of which I shall touch upon a little later. Nonetheless, just because education is a subsystem in the total social system, whatever happens in industry and defense and anywhere else, for that matter, will have an educational exponent. But educators are told about the school's assignment long after other agencies have done their planning and made their decisions. The schools are urged to do their part and beaten over the head for footdragging, conservatism, and sheer incompetence, when in many instances it would take a full educational generation (12-14 years) to bring about the

desired changes. Because education requires a long lead time to effect important changes, any systems analysis that forecasts with some plausibility social demands on the schools 20 years ahead would be of enormous value. But educators are not usually invited to the conferences that do the important planning in our country, or if some are, they are not always the men who understand or can do very much about the public schools as a system. Accordingly, while we may properly withhold our endorsement from inept cost-efficiency applications to education and from illconceived pressures to accelerate innovations, we should be supportive of educational futurism.*

A word needs to be said about bureaucracy. This is a bad word, but it is the name of a very important and necessary feature of a complex social system. A social system is often run by officials of one kind or another having a more or less continuous tenure. They make a career of working in the system, studying it and perfecting it. For them it tends to become an end in itself, although members of one bureaucracy do not have so lofty a view about other bureaucracies. Against bureaucracy the general accusation is that it is overformal, overlegalistic, overconcerned with procedural propriety and very much overconcerned with maintaining itself, come what may. Another word for a large pervasive bureaucracy is the Establishment. We hear much about Establishments and the evils they perpetuate. In the nature of the case the Establishment is conservative for it has something to conserve, including its command of prestige and power, and it is defensive because to individuals in their predicaments the rigidity and impersonality of the Establishment are offensive and hateful.

May I reiterate that these remarks about the nature of social systems is mostly for the record, in order to obviate the criticism that would inevitably ensue if I did not utter them. Having uttered them, I shall use some of these

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*Some educators have already treated this, the work of the Shanes at Indiana, and Professor Van Til, are only a few examples.

notions about the systems to explicate the three areas of confrontation or distress that now characterize the shifts within the system and with the system of systems that constitutes the social order.

Teachers vs. Taxpayers

We are in the midst of a revolt of taxpayers against further increases in expenditures for schools. Tax levy and bond issue referenda are being defeated with alarming frequency. The drain on real estate taxes is one reason often mentioned; resistance to liberal tendencies in the schools is another; symbolic protest against racial integration of the schools is still another. Because so large a proportion of school expenditures is for teachers' salaries, (estimated at 60 percent) teachers have most to lose from the rebellion.

Teachers have responded by organizing for collective negotiations and for possible sanctions, including strikes. These actions have been defended as needed to preserve the public school system, to improve the schools, and to protect the professional status of the teacher. The school boards with the aid of the administration have usually countered by invoking the formal procedures of the system. The union has responded, in turn, by saying that the strike or threat of a strike is the only way left to force the bureaucracy and the public to face the issues.

Without reflecting on the sincerity of either side or on the justice of the respective claims, it must be noted the teacher strikes are rarely staged solely to improve the schools or the status of the profession. Usually there is also a demand for more money or better working conditions or, as in the recent New York City strike, for maintaining the hard-won powers of the union and the tenure of its members. On the other side, school boards rarely pay more than they must.

Administrators are clearly being challenged as the representatives of the teachers, the public, or of the school as a social institution. The teacher

organization can do better by negotiating directly with the revenue sources--the school board, the state legislature, or even the governor. School administrators are now definitely forced into the role of financial, managerial experts whose influence on policy is indirect and covert, much as is the influence of the city manager.

The current militance of teachers is not so much an educational revolt as part of a general demand of service workers for a larger share of the general affluence. Firemen, policemen, transit workers, garbage collectors, and hospital employees are all using their collective power to withhold their indispensable services in order to achieve economic gains that industrial employees have achieved by collective action, and which self-employed professionals have achieved by agreement, tacit or explicit.

Frequently we hear that the demand of the schools for more money, and especially the demands of teachers for higher wages, is not warranted by their results. For example, in a discussion on ghetto problems of education both Kenneth Clark and the late Robert Kennedy voiced the view that the public has a right to see improved results in the schools for increased expenditures (The Center Magazine, November, 1967, Volumn 7, No. 1). Professor Clark noted that despite the extraordinary increases for school expenditures in the city of New York during the last decade no corresponding increases in efficiency had occurred.

Let us assume, for the sake of the argument, that both Clark and Kennedy are right, and that there is no increased efficiency. Perhaps there is even a loss of efficiency. What the argument overlooks is that teachers in pressing for higher wages are not alone in being unable to justify the demand in terms of increased productivity. Barbers, lawyers, and doctors are not giving service that is better in proportion to the increase of their fees. In a few areas increased productivity has lowered the real cost of a product, e.g., mass-produced

products, electricity, and perhaps telephone service, but where service is the principle contribution of a calling, increased costs of living, rather than productivity and efficiency is the chief factor in the price paid for it.

It is interesting to speculate on the effects of a prolonged unwillingness of the public to meet the financial demands of the schools. If salaries do constitute the major item of expenditure, and if the labor market continues to be tight, then we can expect many prospective teachers to move into other fields. The very lack of specificity in the training of teachers makes this quite possible. Their places might be taken by teachers' aides, gifted amateurs, college activists, and matrons no longer kept at home by young children. This solution is devoutly hoped for by the new Establishment and is shared by the separatist groups that favor autonomy for neighborhood schools. This, of course, is a vain hope and when regarded in terms of the size of the national teacher force, a silly one as well.

More and more frequently one hears of another possibility. It is to combine public control of the schools with private operation of them. Under one variation of this scheme, a school board would contract with a private firm to provide school services for its community. Either all of the services would be handed over to the lowest bidder, or several private firms would be permitted to provide schools that would meet the requirements of the Board. The model for this is the kind of contracting the U.S. Office of Education has done with some of the new educational industries. The big advantage claimed for this move is that the more efficient schools would prosper and the less efficient would not. A similar scheme is being proposed for the postal system.

Such a development would, of course, give teachers another kind of employer, but whether they would abandon collective negotations with these employers is doubtful, especially since in the competition for efficiency, teachers' wages

would be the most likely source of savings. Attractive as this notion may be, the efficiency record of government contracting even with producers of hardware, is not encouraging. What bargaining companies would concoct for the edification of economy-minded school boards! But the most discouraging prognosis for this notion is that we do not know what efficiency means in a school system, and no really viable way of even defining is in sight.

A more realistic response to diminished support would be the use of technology to reduce the length and theoretical level of teacher training, and to gain some of the advantages of mass operation, i.e., to increase the efficiency of the individual worker.

Without going into details explicated elsewhere* it may well be that computer-aided instruction in highly improved form could take over all didactics, i.e., the instruction in all components of the curriculum that can be made explicit and therefore be programmed. This includes instruction in all the symbolic skills, and does not exclude certain kinds of problem solving. There is reason to believe that individualized (not personalized) instruction could be achieved better electronically than by live instructors. Such a development could have the following consequences:

1. There could be a distinct separation of didactics or didactic teaching from what might be called encounter teaching. The latter would cover discussion, dialogue, creative activities, certain kinds of discovery learning, and interpersonal relationships that, so far as I know, nobody is seriously planning to program for the computers.
2. This separation could mean a redistribution of function along the following lines: (a) a large corps of classroom instructional operators

*H. S. Broudy, "Some Potentials and Hazards of Educational Technology," in Planning for Effective Utilization of Technology in Education, E. L. Morphet and D. L. Jesser (eds.), Denver, Colorado: Designing Education for the Future, 1968, pp. 62-74.

trained to the level of technicians in two-year post-secondary programs; (b) instructional managers to choose and adapt programs and to make curricular decisions. These would probably be trained to the baccalaureate level plus one or two years of graduate work; (c) research and development personnel, trained to the doctoral level and working at the universities or in the laboratories of the industrial complexes producing the hard and software for computer-aided instruction.

"Teacher" would be the name reserved for the people involved in the encounter phases of schoolkeeping. I do not know what form their training would take--it would probably be closer to that of guidance counselors, school psychologists, social workers, and group therapists than to that of today's school teacher. Presumably, large numbers of personnel of assorted competencies would be used all along the line. The role of supervision would have to change accordingly, but that of the instructional manager would seem to be the most plausible. In small schools' complexes the instructional manager might combine the current roles of the supervisor and principal; in larger complexes, the principal would become the executive manager of the whole enterprise, but he would not necessarily be an expert in instruction.

Strange as such a development now seems, certain pressures make it more than a sheer speculation. One is the pressure to reduce teacher training to an apprentice type of practice teaching. This anti-theoretical stance* plus the potentialities

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*Repeatedly statisticians, school administrators, and the teachers themselves report that there is no correlation between anything save practice teaching in their school careers and success in teaching. It follows from this contention that the best way, if indeed not the only way, to evaluate the product of teacher-training programs is by teaching itself. All of which, logically pursued, would seem to end up in a form of apprentice teaching as the most viable form of teacher preparation. The new Establishment fostered this view vigorously, but assumed tacitly that general education and study of one's field of subject matter were exceptions and should be retained; the theory to be eliminated from teacher training would be the courses in education. Unfortuately for this assumption, measures in general education and subject matter do not correlate impressively with teaching success either, and with good programmed instruction, these two would also become eminently dispensable. The old Establishment's view on this issue, is too mixed up for me to understand much less to summarize.

opened up by micro-teaching and electronic-simulated teaching make it unlikely that more than two years of post-secondary school training will be needed for the didactic phase of schooling. Another pressure comes from the argument that community involvement is more important for teacher training than formal work in professional education. Finally, there is the flight from teacher training in the universities. They would prefer to concentrate on graduate study of education and the training of specialists.

The AERA, perhaps the fastest growing educational organization in this country, is not quite sure whether or not it wants to stay with the old Establishment, although there is no doubt that it wishes to enjoy the research opportunities the new Establishment affords. In the meantime, the study of education rather than personnel training will continue to be the focus of its interest. All in all, what with one thing and another, a plan for training the bulk of classroom teacher as apprentice technicians is probably in the cards, and coupling it with the use of technology might not be a bad solution.

One advantage of this development would be to dispel once and for all the myth that classroom teachers constitute a profession. The fact is that classroom teachers receive far less specialized technical training than do plumbers or electricians. At best, they are people with two or three years of collegiate education, plus a few courses in "education," topped off by student teaching. If we accept the fact that the bulk of classroom teachers are to be technicians, we may be able to inject into the instructional force 10 or 15 percent of truly professionally trained personnel who will do the kind of thinking, diagnosing, and prescribing that cannot be expected from technicians. One of the reasons for believing that this might come about is that the more clearly instructional

operators are recognized by themselves and everyone else as technicians, the more necessary the instructional managers and the encounter teachers will become. As matters now stand, people not even trained to a good technician level are under the illusion that they are much more than technicians.

Black Power vs. the Middle Class

The second focus of distress in the school system is the bid for decentralization of the control of urban schools' neighborhoods. The New York City experiment was not one of those better ideas with which Ford is so generous. It rejects the principle that made centralization a logical corrolary of an ever increasingly interdependent and homogenized society; this is a dangerous ignoring of the social reality. Further, it challenges the middle-class values for which the American public school has in fact, if not in principle, become the custodian. The middle class in either blue or white collars is far from dead, as the recent election demonstrated.

The decentralization move embarrasses the middle-class Establishment because the principle of self-determination is highly respected in the middle-class ideology, and the American tradition applauds a group's revolt when it is denied participation in a system devoted to participatory democracy.

Moreover, the ideologues of the social studies (many of whom favor militant use of teacher power) have been urging the relativity of all values so long that it is now very awkward to oppose a group that takes this relativism seriously and opts for black values rather than white ones. Of course, just how nonmiddle-class blacks want their culture to be I do not know; at times it sounds as if they are merely protesting against their lack of goodies of which the middle class has such an abundance. And while no amount of talk and perspiration in behalf of blacks by whites can ever really atone for the injustice they have perpetrated

or condoned, these injustices will not be remedied by reducing everything to black and white. Black sunlight does not grow vegetables; a sky good for a picnic is blue not black, a good piece of coal is black not white, and there are many good and bad things in the world that are red, orange, green, blue and violet. As a clue to the nature or import of human concerns, color is not very significant.

I do not know how this challenge will fare. The best alternative is for the American school toassume seriously the role of the custodian of a humanistic culture rather than a middle-class or any other class culture. This is not a likely alternative so long as the social scientists make such a universalistic view--at any level of value judgment--scientifically unrespectable. Another is to allow dissenting groups to experiment with separateness and to protect the rest of the community from the effects of the experiment, if it turns out unfortunately. Of course, this would mean letting some neighborhoods and some states keep their schools segregated if they chose to do so. Groups probably will never learn their powers and limitations in any other say.* A third alternative is that blacks will organize politically and economically and exert their influence on all kinds of establishments to achieve a more efficacious role in the social system. This is probably the most likely alternative; certainly, it is the one that other minorities have used successfully, and it does not run counter to the principle of participatory democracy. What stands out clearly, however, is that decentalization is only incidentally an educational issue; it is rather a recognition of

*An educative society I suppose, is one that permits a group to grow through its experiments without perishing from its mistakes. Thus in educative societies, there are areas of tolerated delinquency for the young, for to grow each generation must experience risk, danger, and even evil when young. But unless society protects the young from irreversible bad effects, the wrong individuals may survive. One way of diagnosing the troubles of our generation gap is to say that the traditional areas of tolerated delinquency have lost their boundaries, so that real delinquency has taken their place as a means of growth.

the bitter fact that until blacks have decent incomes, and decent housing, and decent schools almost simultaneously they cannot institute a self-sustaining chain reaction that marks the beginning of real progress for a depressed minority.

Students vs. Administrators

The third distress in the system is the revolt of college students against the administration. I need not recount the sad and by now overfamiliar stories. Nor do I propose to weigh the merits of the issues. Rather I wish to note that this is not primarily an economic struggle of the poor against the rich, and although the black-white issue has been a factor in many campus riots, it is generally agreed that this is not ususally the main factor. It happens that the grievances of blacks fit into the more general pattern of protest against the government's war policy in Vietnam and against the college administration for not being more involved in social battles, and on the wrong side whenever it is involved. The administration seems to be allied with the military establishment, the industrial establishment and the middle-class or upper-middle-class ethic, all more or less odious to the radical left or the militant blacks and often to both.

American students have learned what their counterparts abroad learned much earlier, viz., that a small number willing to be roughed up by the police, can disrupt even a large university. If the student bid for power succeeds, there will be indeed a shift of forces within the social system we call education, for such success will filter down to the high schools, and perhaps even into the homes as far as teenagers are concerned. Already supervision of adolescents is beyond the actual power of parents--if adolescents put the matter to the test.

In this troubled area as in the other two, the establishment is trussed up by its own machinery and the principles which sanctify its authority. Once the principle of participatory democracy is granted as valid in the governance of a

university, there is no reason for excluding the most numerous group--the students--from governance. Moreover, the procedural ponderance of the participtory process often prevents the system from moving at all, let alone fast enough to meet a rapidly developing crisis. But the greatest obstacle to a vigorous and constructive response to the threat of disruption is that within the faculty itself there is a guilty realization that the interests of the university are closely allied to the military-industrial complex, even though scholarship, the traditional function of the intellectual, is supposed to remain independent of these vested interests.

As between an intellectually pure but indigent university and an affluent albeit slightly compromised one, the administration and the most influential faculty members probably will continue to choose affluence. They console themselves with the fact that this affluence showers blessings on scholars and students that otherwise would not be available. As between the proverbs: "Beware the Greeks bearing gifts" and "Don't look a gift horse in the mouth," the choice, on balance, is predictable; unfortunately the guilt feeling lingers on.

Here, as in the other distress areas, the educational system is facing situations that are not primarily educational at all. Educationally, if students were given free choice in their studies at any modern university, and if they were relieved of course exams and grades--as they easily might be if we put our minds to it--they could, and in the main would, choose on the basis of the intellectual content of the courses and the intellectual competence of the instructors. Most universities right now could meet the <u>educational</u> demands of the protestors for relevance without much serious internal change. But student protest is not a primarily educational issue, it is a political, ideological issue, and it spilled over into the streets of Chicago, where the real issues were brought out. Educationally the university could properly insist on a learner status for the student

and the authority of the faculty and administration, but politically the student is not inferior to the faculty or to the administration, and as a citizen his rights to speak and agitate cannot be infringed by invoking the student-teacher authority relationship. As with the other two areas of distress, this one is caused by uneasy shifts within the larger social system. The strata are shifting because in a technological mass society the desire for individuality, for personhood, for identity are not automatically realized in a mass production economy, a mass system of communication, a mass system of ideas.

I have no unusual remedies for the situation. The end of the war in Vietnam may relieve tension, but I doubt that students will be content to play the child after a taste of adult power. The system might try letting students be as adult as they think they are and let them also pay the price for learning the hard way, but this is a big risk. The art of governance in the future may be to provide within a social system space for experimental attacks on the system, a space that is bounded by safeguards for the system as a whole--if the experiment goes sour--and gateways into the system if the experiment succeeds. Can we protect the experimenter from his mistakes? We can and ought to protect him from irreversible evil consequences, but we cannot remove all risk if the experience is to be real and not a childish make believe.

Conclusion

That three major areas of distress within the educational system are the result of power shifts within the social system as a whole should stimulate us to reexamine the strengths and weaknesses of education in that system and as a system in its own right. As to the school as a social system, I would observe that:

1. Operationally, the principle of the division of labor has been distorted into virtual uselessness. The lines between the school, family, church, government, industry are virtually indiscernible. Conditions for schooling

have been given equal status with schooling itself. The school's attempt to control all such conditions has not succeeded, but it has tended to relieve other social institutions from the responsibility for doing their own jobs. Within the system itself the duties of the various eschelons of personnel grow without rhyme or reason. Lunchroom and playground supervision get affixed to the teaching of arithmetic and reading; clerical tasks have the same priority as instruction; pseudo specialties spring up everywhere.*

2. There is a profound discrepancy between the public's expectations of the school and the competence of the personnel recruited to meet these expectations. Schooling is made the pivot of all social reforms and progress, but it is entrusted to a teaching force that is marginal in talent, training, and career commitment. Our most important social commitment is entrusted, in large part, to people for whom teaching is a part-time, temporary, or supplementary employment. The teaching force is made up neither of interchangeable technicians who can be freely plugged into any school, nor of highly individualized professional persons who can adapt to any schoolroom in terms of knowledge.

3. Despite the rising expenditures for public schools, a $500-$600 per pupil cost is still the bargain of the century. Simple custodial care of one child at baby-sitting rates ($1 an hour) would come to $1,260 for 180 seven-hour days. The strange ambivalence the American public

*By a pseudo specialty, I mean one that comprises tasks that require less intellectual competence than the one from which they have been split off, for example, to make the coordination and facilitation of PTA activities in a community an educational specialty. A teacher or supervisor to whom such a task is assigned as a specialty, or one to whom is assigned system-wide responsibility for keeping track of visual aids equipment has lowered the level of his intellectual functioning and has brought into being a pseudo specialty.

feels toward its schools is illustrated by the simultaneous assertion that (a) the schools are bad, inefficient, and actually miseducative and (b) that the cause of the plight of the disadvantaged is that they drop out of school. Whatever our reservations about teacher strikes are, it must be conceded that nothing short of closing the schools can make some people aware of the economic facts of educational life.

4. Sooner or later, the school as a social system will disintegrate into a thousand fragmented programs, courses, and curricula if it continues to cater to an unlimited plurality of cultural predilections. The authority of the several intellectual disciplines, including the humanities and the fine arts, provide the schools with a shield against the whims and prejudices that various groups are tempted to elevate into curriculum demands. As a social institution the school could properly represent that intellectual tradition. In addition, the right of school personnel to make the fundamental decisions about curriculum and method could be established by their mastery of a set of professional studies that are intellectually defensible. I believe that such a set could be developed. I happen to believe also that the American public would glady support claims to autonomy so based. If citizen groups have tried to interfere with the curriculum and instructional policies of the schools, it is because of two factors: one is that the old Establishment was not overly fussy about intellectual defensibility, and the other has been the admission by that Establishment, especially its administrative wing, that it had no standards for making curriculum choices themselves, witness the use of "innovative" as a standard. In such circumstances there is little left but to invite the citizenry to settle curriculum problems democratically.

But if educational decisions properly fall within the domain of the educational professional, the scrutiny of the school as a social system and its place in the total social order is everybody's business. The battle for the control of the schools is a question of stresses and distresses within a social system and among social systems and should fall under the general scrutiny of the citizen. One would like to hope that out of the struggle between the two Establishments is now emerging a strong cadre of men and women with sufficient talent, training, and commitment to spearhead a genuine reconstruction of the school (not necessarily a reconstruction of the society by the school alone) into a social system that can endure a high degree of stress without too much distress.

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